



### Legislative Update: Governor Signs 9/11 Tax Relief Bill

**S-1215:** Governor James E. McGreevey has signed the bill waiving state income tax for WTC victims for the years 2000 and 2001. The Division of Taxation's website will soon have instructions for refunds if a family has already paid. Meanwhile, if your family receives a bill, please ask your NJFAP Advocate to call Ed Scheingold at 609 777-5615. Taxation is in the process of deleting the names of all the WTC victims, but some bills may have been automatically generated by the computer.

### New Jersey Family Advocate Program

Joanne Gerow, Executive Director of New Jersey Family Advocate Management, Inc. (NJFAM) hosted a meeting of the Family Advisory Board January 15, 2003 at NJFAM's offices, 630 Bangs Avenue, Asbury Park. The Family Advisory Board is a volunteer group of survivors and families of victims of the September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 Attacks established by NJFAM's by-laws to assist in the Family Advocate Program (FAP) by providing advice and insights. Currently, members of the Family Advisory Board have volunteered to assist FAP supervisors in creating a family satisfaction survey. Other projects will be created as the need arises. The FAP is now serving over 550 families.

In addition, NJFAM has assisted 66 displaced workers to date through the September 11<sup>th</sup> Fund's Ongoing Recovery Program. The main focus of the program is to help New Jersey residents return to work. For those who are eligible, Information Sessions are being held in Monmouth, Bergen and Hudson Counties. At the Information Sessions, available resources are discussed and participants are certified for eligibility. The second part of the Program, known as the Employment Assistance Program (EAP) is designed to help individuals who lost their jobs or experienced a substantial reduction in earnings as a result of the September 11<sup>th</sup> Attacks. The EAP is being offered through the Monmouth, Bergen and Hudson County One-Stop Career Centers. This program is also open to undocumented workers and all information provided is completely confidential.

The following individuals are **eligible** for EAP services including assessment and career coaching; job search assistance; education and training, and post employment retention services:

- 1. Dependent family members of the deceased**, regardless of pre-9/11 employment status;
- 2. Individuals who worked south of Canal Street and in Chinatown<sup>1</sup>** in New York City prior to September 11, 2001 and who meet the eligibility criteria of unemployed or underemployed as defined below:

**Unemployed** is defined as:

An individual who is not employed at the time of eligibility determination and who became unemployed during the period September 11, 2001 to January 11, 2002.

**Underemployed** means:

An individual who became unemployed at some point during the period September 11, 2001 to January 11, 2002, but is currently employed at gross wages of less than 70% of pre-September 11, 2001 wage income; or

An individual who experienced a reduction in earnings during the period September 11, 2001 to January 11, 2002, resulting in wages of less than 70% pre-September 11, 2001 wage income and who is currently realizing gross wages of less than 70% of pre-September 11, 2001 wage income.

**Call 800-652-7477 to access** to EAP Services and NJFAM Information Sessions.

### Lower Manhattan Development Corporation

The Lower Manhattan Development Corporation (LMDC) has sent a letter to the families outlining two important steps: 1) Releasing the draft mission statement for a memorial created by families, survivors, first responders and residents; and 2) Seeking public input on the design concepts to rebuild currently on display at the Winter Garden in New York City.

With regard to the mission statement, the drafting committees prepared revised drafts of a memorial mission statement and a memorial program using the Families Advisory Council's preliminary drafts and public comments as a starting point. The

<sup>1</sup>The area north of Canal Street bounded to the east by Essex Street, to the north by Delancey Street and by Broadway to the west.

LMDC letter stated that "[t]he memorial mission statement serves as a compass to guide not only the creation of the memorial, but also its evolution through the ages – ensuring the symbolic representation never diverges from the mission."

The Draft Memorial Mission Statement For The World Trade Center Site:

*Remember And Honor The Thousands of Innocent Men, Women, And Children Killed in The Horrific Attacks of September 11, 2001. Respect This Place Made Sacred Through Tragic Loss. Recognize The Endurance of Those Who Survived, The Courage of Those Who Risked Their Lives to Save Others, And The Compassion of All Who Supported Us in Our Darkest Hours. May The Lives Remembered, The Deeds Recognized, And The Spirit Reawakened Be Eternal Beacons, Which Reaffirm Respect for Life, Strengthen Our Resolve to Preserve Freedom, and Inspire an End to Hatred, Ignorance and Intolerance.*

In addition, the committees devised "Guiding Principles and Elements" for the memorial program. They view the Guiding Principles as the aspirations that must be embodied within and conveyed through the memorial, regardless of the various interpretations to which it will ultimately be subject. The committees drafted Program Elements to provide memorial designers with a list of specific elements that should be physically included in the memorial, without prescribing how or inhibiting creativity.

**The Draft Guiding Principles:**

*Embody the goals and spirit of the Mission Statement; convey the magnitude of personal and physical loss at this location; acknowledge all those who aided in rescue, recovery and healing; respect the sacred quality of the space that will be designated for the Memorial; encourage reflection and contemplation; evoke the historical significance and worldwide impact of September 11, 2001; create an original and powerful statement of enduring and universal symbolism; inspire and engage people to learn more about the events and impact of September 11, 2001; and evolve over time with our understanding of the events.*

**The Draft Program Elements:**

*Recognize Each Individual Who Was a Victim of the Attacks — Victims of the September 11, 2001 Attacks in*

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*New York, Virginia and Pennsylvania and victims of the 1993 terrorist bombing of the World Trade Center;*

*Provide Space for Contemplation — An area for quiet visitation and contemplation; a visitor area for families and loved ones of victims; a separate accessible space to serve as a final resting-place for unidentified remains from the World Trade Center site;*

*Create a Unique And Powerful Setting — Be distinct from other memorial structures like a museum or visitor center; make visible the footprints of the original World Trade Center; include appropriate transitions or approaches to, or within, the Center towers - memorial;*

*Convey Historic Authenticity — The memorial or its surrounding areas may include: surviving original elements; preservation of existing conditions of the World Trade Center site; allowances for public ceremonies and celebrations.*

With regard to the design concepts, the New York *Daily News* reported the following on January 20<sup>th</sup>:

- ❖ After public comments essentially rejected the first set of design concepts, officials are now considering nine designs from seven teams of architects which include: a setting for a memorial, a skyline with distinction, a new street grid, transit hub, public spaces, and a minimum of 6.5 million square feet of commercial space;
- ❖ Although there is no obvious favorite, the LMDC should choose one of the plans, or a combination of plans, shortly: originally the deadline was January 31, 2003, but reports are that it may be extended to the middle of February;
- ❖ After that, LMDC will conduct an international competition for a memorial design to be incorporated in the setting created by the plan chosen;
- ❖ To date Public Hearings on the nine designs have not resulted in many specific comments. To register your own, go to or visit the display at the Winter Garden and fill out a comment card;
- ❖ Whether the plan chosen ever gets built depends on privately financed decisions. The plan parts paid for by public funds – the memorial, the transit hub and the street grid – are more likely to be built as soon as possible.

## **Town Hall Meeting with Kenneth Feinberg Regarding the Federal Victim Compensation Fund**

Special Master Kenneth Feinberg of the Federal Compensation Fund will hold a special “town hall” meeting at Seton Hall University in South Orange on February 18, 2003 at 7 p.m. After a presentation, Mr. Feinberg will take questions and answers concerning issues involving the Fund. The meeting will be held in the Bishop Dougherty University Center, 2d floor faculty lounge. Seton Hall University is located on South Orange Avenue in South Orange. Anyone wishing to attend **must RSVP** to Kevin Duffy at 973-754-3754.

## **Health Insurance**

The September 11<sup>th</sup> Fund is offering health insurance through Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield to New Jersey families of victims of the September 11<sup>th</sup> Attacks and “secondary victims” who do not have access to any other benefits. The plan offered is the insurer’s standard commercial HMO and will include a prescription card.

To qualify, an individual must be either a dependent of a victim or meet the definition of “secondary victim” which is someone working south of Canal Street, inclusive of Chinatown who:

- ❖ lost employment directly as a result of the event and was subsequently reemployed without health insurance at or below 75% of pre-September 11<sup>th</sup> wages, and/or
- ❖ is experiencing a reduction of wages (but not actual employment) as a direct result of the event, which placed them at or below 70% of their previous income level.

If you would like to enroll, please contact your Family Advocate or call Safe Horizon at 866 689-4357 or Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield at 800 224-1234.

## **FEMA’S MRA Continues for Those who met the Deadline: January 31, 2003**

Even though the deadline for the Mortgage and Rental Assistance (MRA) program offered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) was January 31, 2003, you can continue to process your application and receive a grant for up to 18 months of rent and mortgage payments as long as you registered by that date and met the guidelines for financial difficulty as the result of the September 11<sup>th</sup> Attacks. The FEMA Applicant Assistance Center at 41 Worth St. in Manhattan will continue to process and accept paper work and supporting documentation from any applicant who registered by the deadline. Additionally, people who are currently receiving assistance through the MRA program will not be affected by this.

Due to the unprecedented nature of the September 11<sup>th</sup> Attacks and resulting physical and economic damage, FEMA extended the application deadline four times. FEMA reports that over 11,000 households have received approximately \$100 million in MRA grants to date.

## **“The Bridge: New York – Berlin 2002”**

The German government, in a joint project with DaimlerChrysler, Lufthansa and other German businesses, is offering a two week trip to Germany for 15 to 18 year old children who were directly affected by the September 11<sup>th</sup> Attacks. The program, which debuted last year in New York, will be available to New Jersey children this year. The trip will probably take place in late June to mid-July. Some of the selection criteria include possession of a valid US passport or valid green card; medical certification; participation of parent/guardian in orientation; a willingness to articulate and share experiences; and self-discipline and capability of functioning in a foreign country with limited adult supervision. The participants will stay in the homes of participating German families.

More information will soon be available through your Family Advocate. Those families who have not signed up for an Advocate may call the Office of Recovery and Victim Assistance (ORVA) at 609-777-1248 for additional information.

**If you have a child interested in participating, please advise your Family Advocate or ORVA by February 10.**

## **Tuesday’s Children**

Tuesday’s Children is a nonprofit organization founded by the brothers, colleagues and friends of WTC victims to provide ongoing structure and support for the victims’ children and their families through mentoring and innovative programs built upon family and community interaction. If you would like to register your family, call Chris Burke at 516-562-9000 or visit the website at [www.tuesdayschildrenfund.org](http://www.tuesdayschildrenfund.org)

### **Family Assistance Update**

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